



## ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF MEETING

3/16/2022 7:30 PM

Conducted by Remote Participation – Zoom Meeting

#### ATTENDEES:

Gibian	P	Padaria	A	Harmer	P	Tosti	P
Blundell	P	Migliazzo	P	LaCourt	P	Nascimento	P
Ellis	P	Wallach	P	Jones	P	Deshler	A
Healy	P	Foskett	P	Kocur	P	Carman	P
Beck	P	Crawford Pokress	P	Kellar	P	McKenna	P
						Bradley	P

P indicates Present; L indicates late; A indicates Absent

Visitors: Sean Keane (ACMI), Paul Schlichtman (Article 20 Requester), Jenny Raitt (Planning & Community Development Director), Daniel Amstutz (Senior Transportation Planner), Muris Kobaslija (Bicycle Advisory Committee), Eugene Benson (Redevelopment Board), Stewart Ikeda (Co-Chair, Arlington Commission on Arts & Culture & Arts Arlington), Cristin Canterbury Bagnall (Treasurer, Arlington Commission on Arts & Culture), Steve Poltorzycki (Co-Chair, Arlington Commission on Arts & Culture)

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Foskett read the rules for the meeting as formulated by Town Counsel based on the Governor's authorization. An important rule is that all votes, unless unanimous, must be by roll call.  
Attendance was taken by roll call.

#### MEETING MINUTES

1. 3/9/22 meeting minutes were accepted with 16 in favor and one abstention (Wallach).

#### HEARINGS AND BUDGETS

1. Code Enforcement (Warrant Article No. 20)
  - a. VOTE: A motion that the Finance Committee take no action was approved unanimously.
2. Blue Bikes (Warrant Article No. 60)
  - a. The town anticipates signing a renewed contract with Motivate August 2022.
  - b. VOTE: A motion for positive action on the article totaling \$100,000 was approved with 11 in favor and five in opposition.

3. Design Standards (Warrant Article No. 65)
  - a. VOTE: A motion for favorable action on the article totaling \$50,000 was approved with nine in favor (Ellis, Beck, Wallach, LaCourt, Jones, Kocur, Kellar, Nascimento and McKenna), seven in opposition (Gibian, Blundell, Healy, Crawford, Harmer, Tosti and Carman) and one abstention (Migliazzo).
  
4. Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture (Warrant Article No. 56-m)
  - a. The commission's budget was reduced from \$35,000 to \$30,000 following the onset of the pandemic.
  - b. VOTE: A motion for favorable action to appropriate \$35,000 to the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture was approved unanimously.

5. Summary

<b>Article #</b>	<b>Warrant Article</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>
20	Code Enforcement	n/a	No Action
60	Blue Bikes	\$100,000	Approved
65	Design Standards	\$50,000	Approved
56-m	Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture	\$35,000	Approved

**CONCLUSION**

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 PM.

The next meeting is Monday, March 21, 2022 at 7:30 PM.

Tara Bradley  
3/22/2022

Reference 1: Article 20 Vote/Code Enforcement Submission - Paul Schlichtman

Reference 2: ACAC Budget Presentation

Reference 3: Town Manager Memo of Support for ACAC Budget Request

Reference 4: Select Board Member Len Diggins Letter of Support for ACAC Budget Request

Reference 5: Select Board Member Eric Helmuth Letter of Support for ACAC Budget Request

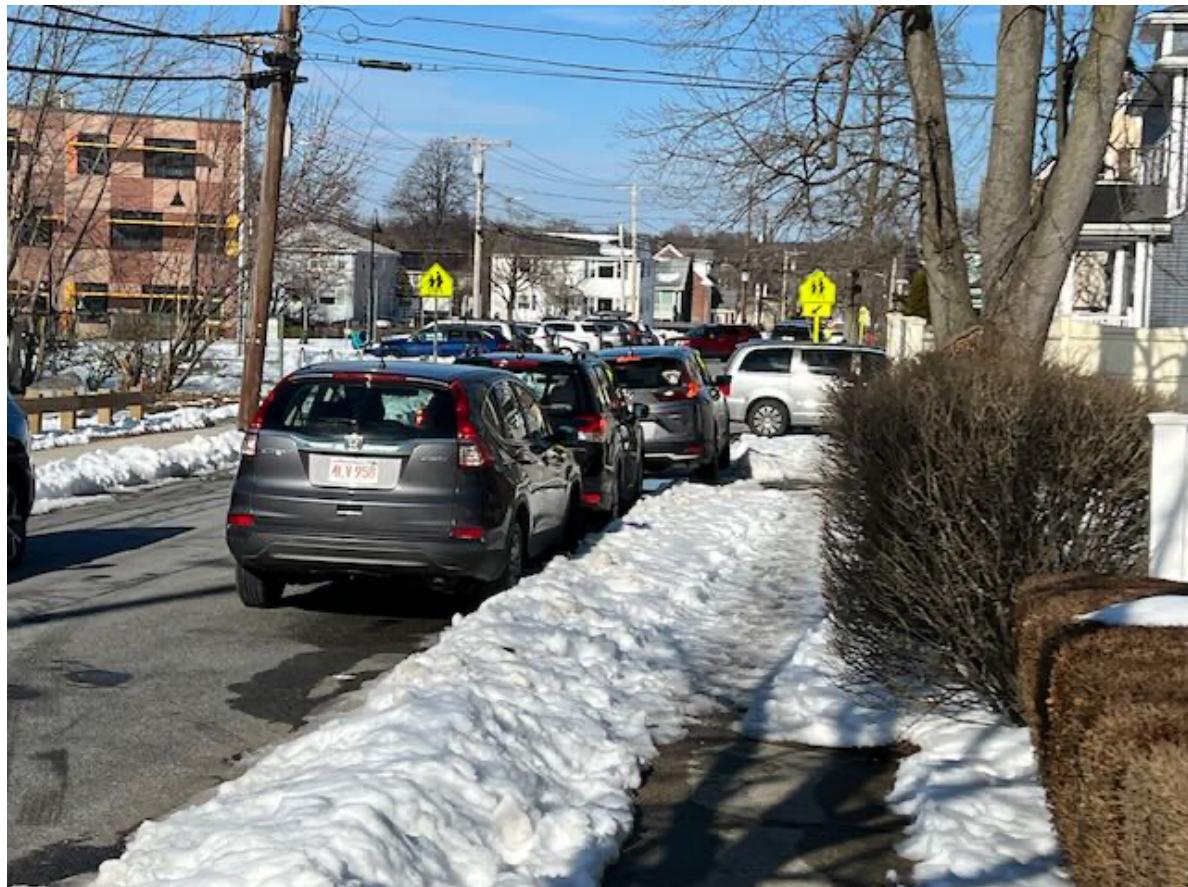
Reference 6: 25 Letters of Support for ACAC – Various Letter Writers

## ARTICLE 20 VOTE/CODE ENFORCEMENT

Submitted by Paul Schlichtman

To see if the town will vote to grant enforcement power to a Code Enforcement Officer, in the Department of Planning & Community Development, for the purpose of enforcing provisions of the Town Bylaws and Zoning Bylaws that do not pertain to building standards, or take any action related thereto.

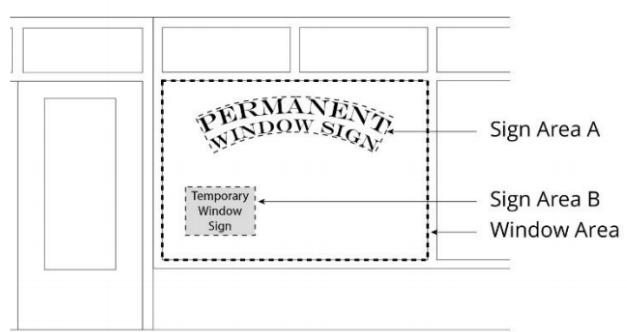
**Rationale:** During the 2021 Annual Town Meeting, the building inspector said inspectional services focuses on building safety and standards, and does not enforce other town bylaws. Many municipalities, including Fort Worth TX, divide code enforcement into two divisions, one pertaining to building standards and the other focused on quality of life and zoning issues. By creating a Code Enforcement Officer position in the Department of Planning & Community Development, unenforced bylaws (such as signs and snow removal) can be enforced. As the building inspector is listed as the enforcement officer in the town bylaws, it is necessary to add this new position somewhere in the bylaws in order to grant this person the ability to take enforcement action.



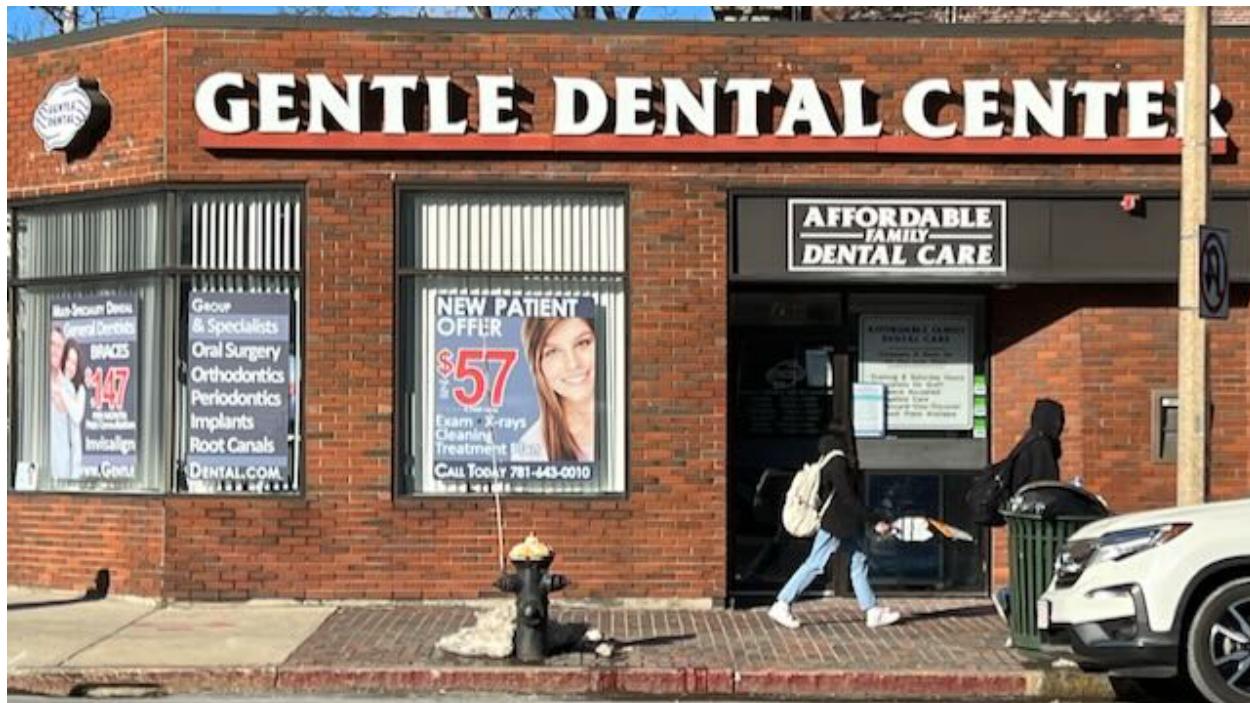
North Union Street near Thompson School, five days after storm. March 2, 2022

(11) **Window Sign.** Window signs must comply with the standards provided in the table below.

Window Sign Standards	
Standard	Requirements
Sign Area	Combined area of permanent and temporary window signs must not exceed 25% of the area of the window where they are displayed.
Sign Placement	No higher than 2 <sup>nd</sup> story windows. Inside mounting required.
Illumination	Non-illuminated or externally illuminated only. Neon and single-color LED in some applications. See Section 6.2.4(C).
Permitting	Sign permit required. See Section 6.2.2(A).



This diagram is included for illustrative purposes only. It is not part of the Arlington Zoning Bylaw.



Gentle Dental, 725 Massachusetts Avenue. March 2, 2022



BB Liquors, 1215 Massachusetts Avenue. March 2, 2022

# ACAC

## Presentation to FinCom

March 16, 2022

Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture



ARLINGTON COMMISSION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

## **What is ACAC?**

---

**ACAC is the umbrella organization housing several formerly independent Town organizations . . .**

### **ACAC Constituent Organizations**

- Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture
- Arlington Cultural Council
- Arlington Public Art
- Arlington Poet Laureate
- Cultural District Managing Partnership

**. . . a number of which had previously been separately funded.**

### **ACAC Also Includes Representatives From Other Town Constituencies**

- Non-profit arts community (Arlington Center for the Arts)
- Business community (Arlington Chamber of Commerce)
- Schools (School Committee appointed representative)
- Dept. of Planning & Community Development (liaison representative)
- Working artist community (ArtLinks)

## ACAC Mandate

---

**ACAC has been given a mandate to grow arts and culture in Arlington.**



**A vibrant arts & culture scene gives Arlington a strategic advantage in competing with other towns for residents and visitors.**

## ACAC Accomplishments FY 2022

**Studies show that investment in arts and culture has a positive impact on the local economy**

\$1.00 → **\$2.30**



Every dollar spent by an arts and cultural organization generates **\$2.30** in sales for nearby businesses\*

The typical arts attendee spends **\$31.47** per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission.\*\*

\* New England Foundation for the Arts Study

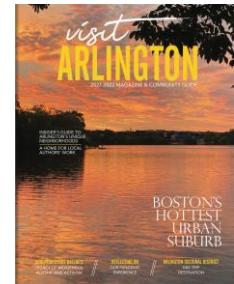
\*\*Americans for the Arts Study

## ACAC Accomplishments FY 2022

**ACAC made good progress towards its goal of establishing Arlington as a cultural destination.**

### Cultural Tourism: Promotion

- Audio tour of Cultural District
- “Visit Arlington” Chamber’s Magazine (63% of content focused on arts & culture)
- ACAC website (51% of in-state traffic from outside of Arlington)
- Media: pieces in Boston Globe, Boston 25 News, WBUR Artery, Advocate, YourArlington.com, Artscope, Art New England



### Cultural Tourism: Events

- Dozen outdoor performances
- “Neighborhood Haiku”: 300+ visitors/shoppers during opening celebration
- ACA’s Open Studios & Porchfest: Over 1,500 participants
- “Chairful Where You Sit”: fundraiser



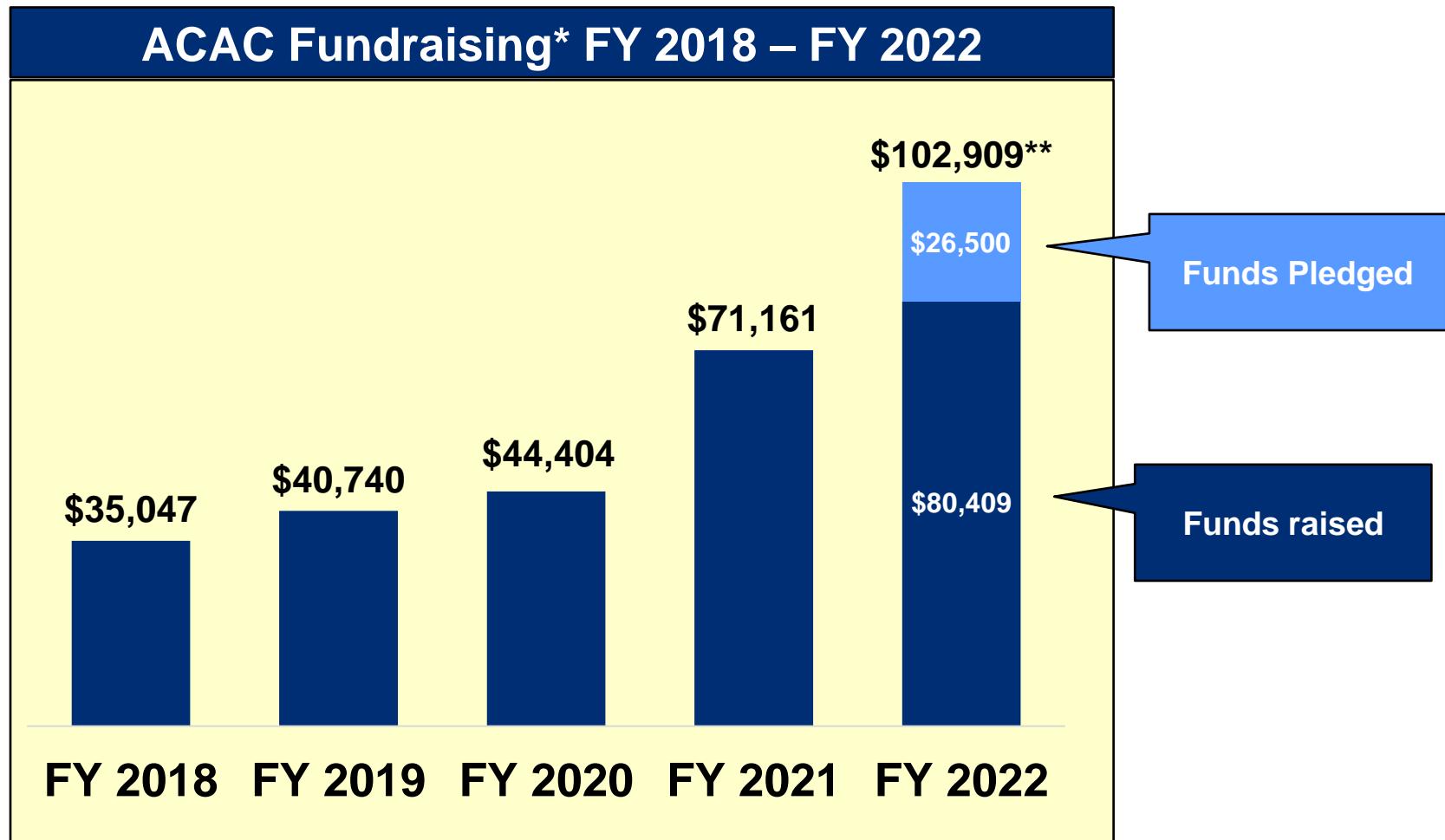
### Cultural Tourism: Outdoor Art

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Reflections on Our Pandemic Experience” (Menotomy Rocks Park &amp; Arlington Center)</li><li>• Painted utility boxes</li><li>• Painted recycled doors</li><li>• Youth banners (Mass. Ave.)</li><li>• Black History Month banners</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Remembrance of Climate Futures” (major MAPC grant)</li><li>• Portraits of Black Arlington</li><li>• Confluence (Spy Pond Park)</li><li>• “Persistence” (Bikeway)</li><li>• “Pathways” (Bikeway)</li></ul>
---	--



## ACAC Accomplishments FY 2022

**ACAC raises a considerable amount of funds to accomplish its mandate.**



\*Fundraising shown does NOT include Town funding

\*\*As of 3/3/22

## ACAC Accomplishments FY 2022

**ACAC has maintained and grown its collaborations with Town Departments, Committees, non-profits, and businesses\*.**

### Town Departments / Committees



- Schools (Hardy, Thompson, Ottoson, AHS)
- APS Green Teams
- APS Visual Arts & Music Depts.
- Robbins & Fox Libraries
- DPW
- H&HS (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)
- Human Rights Commission
- Economic Development Recovery Task Force
- A-TED
- Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee
- Zero Waste Arlington

### Non-Profits



- Arlington Center for the Arts
- Dallin Museum
- ACMI
- Arlington Friends of the Drama
- Arlington Historical Society
- Friends of Spy Pond Park
- Friends of the Fox Library
- Arlington Children's Theater
- Odaiko New England
- Old Schwamb Mill
- True Story Theater
- Arlington International Film Festival
- Non-Profit Volunteer Summit

### Businesses



American Alarm	Kickstand Café
Arlington Service Station	Leader Bank
Cambridge Savings	The Legacy
Century 21 Adams	Maruichi, Japanese Food & Deli
Chamber of Commerce	Morningside Music
Classic Kitchen & Bath Design	MyEyeDr
Coldwell Banker	Object of Stories
Column Health	RepHAIRations
Custom Contracting	Roasted Granola
D'Agostino's Food Store	Sound Postings
Heights Barber Shop	Sports Etc.
J&J Hair Studio	Utopia Cleaners
	Wanamaker
	Watertown Savings
	Za

\*ACAC also works closely with state and regional organizations (Mass. Cultural Council, MassCreative, ArtsBoston, ArtWeek, and regional tourism offices).

## **ACAC Accomplishments FY 2022**

---

**ACAC boosts the local economy and enriches the cultural lives of community members, as recognized by a broad cross-section of local organizations and individuals.**

**Letters/memos of support sent to FinCom by:**

- Select Board member (Lenard Diggins)
- Select Board member (Eric Helmuth)
- Town Manager (Adam Chapdelaine)
- Arlington Department of Public Works (Charlotte Milan)
- Arlington Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) (Jillian Harvey, Director)
- Arlington Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee
- Arlington Human Rights Commission
- Arlington Poet Laureate (Steven Ratiner)
- Arlington Public Schools (Arts Department; Sustainability Coordinator)
- Arlington Tourism & Economic Development Committee
- Arts Boston (Catherine Peterson, Exec. Dir.)
- Climate Futures Arlington (Greta Mastro, Intern, Sophomore at AHS)
- Fox Library
- Mass. Cultural Council, MassCreative, Medford Arts Council
- Odaiko New England, Regent Theatre, Old Schwamb Mill, RepHAIRations)
- YourArlington.com
- Numerous individual community members

**Quality of life, including arts and culture, was one of the reasons Arlington was recognized as the #14 best small city in America (WalletHub).**

## ACAC FY 2022 Budget

---

**FY 2022 budget relies on a significant amount of fundraising to deliver important arts and culture programs to the community.**

FY 2022 ACAC Budget		FY2022 Budget	FY2022 YTD* Actual
<b>REVENUE</b>	Individual donations	\$15,000	\$12,891
	Business donations	\$7,500	\$550
	Grants	\$50,000	\$38,600
	Town	\$30,000	\$30,000
	Previously raised donations	\$28,368	\$28,368
	<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$130,868</b>	<b>\$110,409</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	Programs	\$105,425	\$66,360
	Website	\$7,000	\$1,549
	Marketing	\$11,600	\$4,975
	Fundraising	\$3,000	\$602
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$127,025</b>	<b>\$73,486</b>

84% of Annual Revenue Budget already raised

\*As of 3/3/22

**Town funding comprises only 23% of ACAC's annual operating budget, but that 23% enables ACAC to successfully raise the remaining 77% needed to deliver its programs, serve the community's arts and culture needs, and promote local economic development.**

## ACAC FY 2023 Budget Request

---

**ACAC requests \$35,000 funding for FY 2023 (a level originally provided for FY 2021) to carry out its Mission of enriching our community with arts & culture and boosting the local economy.**

<b>FY 2023 ACAC Budget Request</b>		<b>FY 2023</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>	Individual donations	\$16,000
	Business donations	\$7,500
	Grants	\$57,500
	Town	\$35,000
	Funds on hand	\$15,000
	<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$131,000</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	Programs	\$101,000
	Website	\$10,000
	Marketing	\$15,000
	Fundraising	\$5,000
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$131,000</b>

## **ACAC FY 2023 – FY 2025 Budget Forecast**

---

**ACAC anticipates requesting funding for FY2023 - FY2024 at a level equal to that originally provided for FY2021 in order to carry out its Mission.**

<b>FY 2023-2025 ACAC Budget</b>		<b>FY 2023</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>	Individual donations	\$16,000	\$18,000	\$20,000
	Business donations	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$13,000
	Grants	\$57,500	\$60,000	\$62,000
	Town	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
	Funds on hand	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$131,000</b>	<b>\$133,000</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	Programs	\$101,000	\$106,500	\$115,000
	Website	\$10,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
	Marketing	\$15,000	\$16,000	\$17,000
	Fundraising	\$5,000	\$7,500	\$5,000
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$131,000</b>	<b>\$133,000</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>



**Town of Arlington  
Office of the Town Manager**

**Adam W. Chapdelaine**  
**Town Manager**

**730 Massachusetts Avenue**  
**Arlington MA 02476-4908**  
**Phone (781) 316-3010**  
**Fax (781) 316-3019**  
**E-mail: [achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us)**  
**Website: [www.arlingtonma.gov](http://www.arlingtonma.gov)**

**To:** Finance Committee

**From:** Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager

**RE:** Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture Budget Request

**Date:** March 2, 2022

---

I am writing today to express my support for the Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture (ACAC) FY2023 budget request.

As we continue to come out of this pandemic, it seems clear that there will be more opportunity and demand for projects and programming initiated by the ACAC. Work by the ACAC continues to use Town funds to leverage both donation and grant funding and their work also is key to helping local businesses recover as ACAC projects regularly attract residents and visitors to Arlington's business districts. Based on this, I strongly support their FY2023 budget request.

Thank you for your consideration of their request.

March 8, 2022

To: Arlington Finance Committee  
From: Lenard Diggins, Select Board Member & Town Meeting Member, Precinct 3  
Re: Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC) Funding Request

Dear Members of the Finance Committee,

Hopefully we have experienced the last major wave of COVID-19, and we are close to the end of this pandemic. As we look back over the last 2 years, I think we all recognize that the ACAC was a bright spot that guided us through the tough times and provided us with inspirations and aspirations for a better future. Like the basic biology research that had been done and that made it possible to develop a vaccine in an amazingly short amount of time, we were fortunate to have a robust ACAC in place as we entered the early months of a pandemic that lasted far longer than most of us had expected.

As an example, for me and apparently many others in our community, the haiku workshops along with the haiku contest provided a space in which we could create poetry, both alone and collaboratively. Pandemic or not, the gathering for the reading and viewing of the winning entries in the "Haikus in the Heights Contest" was one of the best-attended events I've experienced in the Heights. Indeed, whether the times are good times or bad or the oftentimes mix of both good and bad, the arts can bring us together to embrace, examine, and enhance our culture and make our community stronger and more resilient.

Though understandably the ACAC's funding has been reduced in anticipation of less spending during the pandemic, arguably and demonstrably, the ACAC has played a greater role than was anticipated. Let's reward their ingenuity and success by helping to reduce what I suspect is an unsustainable amount of stress and strain on the commissioners and those who volunteer with the ACAC. We can ask people to do more with less, but they can overperform for only so long before they are drained and unable to continue making their valuable contributions.

For many of us, it's almost axiomatic that the arts are beneficial. Nonetheless, I expect that members of this committee would always appreciate more evidence. In case you aren't familiar with this paper, I submit this piece of peer-reviewed research that is compelling to the biologist in me:

Art and Psychological Well-Being: Linking the Brain to the Aesthetic Emotion

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00739/full>

As always, I know that you will make funding decisions to the best of your abilities on behalf of the Arlington community. We may not always find ourselves 100% happy with your choices, but we take comfort in knowing that your decisions are made in good faith; and for that we are grateful.

So, could I end without the obligatory haiku? Of course not!

Arlington Culture,  
Arlington Arts thrive year round!  
Fondly, we thank you!

Lenard Diggins (Windsor St)  
Select Board Member & Town Meeting Member (Precinct 3) & Perhaps Future Haiku Laureate

33 Grandview Road  
Arlington, MA 02476

March 5, 2022

Charles Foskett, chair  
Town of Arlington Finance Committee  
730 Massachusetts Avenue  
Arlington MA 02476

Dear Mr. Foskett and Members of the Finance Committee,

I write to respectfully request your positive consideration of the Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture's FY2023 budget request of \$35,000.

In just my first year serving on the Select Board I've had several opportunities to attend ACAC programs that drew many members of the public to our small business districts and public spaces, thus contributing to both the economic and civic vitality of our community.

I have also been impressed with the ACAC's creativity in developing pandemic-compatible events. Their team has worked hard to not only maintain but increase its public activity over the past two years. The storefront haiku programs are an excellent example of arts programming that provides residents with opportunities for creative expression, reflection, and engagement with our small businesses.

The work of ACAC enhances the public image of the town, boosts local business, and builds a stronger sense of community. For a very modest public expenditure it provides tremendous value. I respectfully urge Finance Committee to acknowledge that value with a positive vote for the full amount of this budget request.

Sincerely,



Eric Helmuth  
Arlington Select Board Member



March 10, 2022

Dear Finance Committee members,

I am writing in support of the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC) and the essential role the Commission plays. My perspective on the excellence of the ACAC's work is based on being a proud Arlington resident and the Executive Director of ArtsBoston, Greater Boston's largest arts service organization. ArtsBoston connects the cultural sector and helps organizations build audiences through data-driven research, promotional support, networking, convening, and professional development. The value ACAC provides to Arlington is impressive and worthy of the town's support.

This value can be seen in three areas:

- Heightened visibility with ACAC's promotion of Arlington cultural activities to area residents both in our town and surrounding communities. We know that cultural consumers play an important role in increasing money spent with restaurants and retail and are an integral part of a smart destination marketing plan.
- Arlington's Public art programs: for example, the activated Minuteman Bike Trail provides a reason to pause for the thousands of walkers and cyclists who pass through. It shines a spotlight on Arlington for folks from Boston, Cambridge, Lexington, Somerville, Medford, and beyond.
- ACAC is an advocate for Arlington artists and arts organizations to town government, creating a vital communication loop for healthy ongoing dialogue. It also represents Arlington artists and arts groups with valuable resources like the Mass Cultural Council, MASSCreative, New England Foundation for the Arts, and Arts Boston.

This infrastructure investment by the town reaps many benefits, including leveraging funding to obtain significant additional dollars from outside sources.

Many thanks all of your work for Arlington and for supporting ACAC's budget request.

Sincerely,

Catherine Peterson  
Executive Director

87 Thorndike Street, Arlington, MA 02474

January 31, 2022

To: Members of the Finance Committee, Town of Arlington  
From: Jillian Harvey, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division Director  
Re: Letter of support on behalf of the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC)

Dear Members of the Finance Committee:

I am writing to you in support of continued funding for the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC). I have had the pleasure of working with the ACAC on a number of projects over the last two years that have exemplified the vital role this commission holds in the community.

As Director of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Division I applaud the Commission's decision to restructure and expand, and implement the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) taskforce, which strengthened strategic plan goals for sustainability, diverse representation, and relationship-building.

In both 2021 and 2022 Cecily Miller of ACAC played a pivotal role in collaborating with the Arlington Human Rights Commission to host a Call for Artists for new Black History Month banners, which are hung up along Massachusetts Ave during the month of February. Bringing these creative opportunities to community members is not only providing an avenue for artistic expression in celebration of Black History, but it is also educational as each banner has a story and a meaning to it.

The Elevating Arlington's Voices of Color (EAVoC) archive project could not be possible without the collaboration of the DEI Division, the Robbins Library and the ACAC. The archive is set to launch this February, but the last year was spent cultivating stories, and providing spaces for community members of color to come to and hear from different artists of color and participate in workshops to help them with their own narrative pieces.

Additionally, the work with Cecily and Chanel Thervil, the current Artist in Residence has been such an invigorating experience for members of the Black community here in Arlington. Art and culture bring folks together, and foster a space where people can find community- something that had been expressed as lacking for people of color, that there is not a sense of community but the opportunities created by the meet and greets allowed for deeper connections to be made.

The DEI Division supports public art and its power to build strong bonds and relationships within communities. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACAC has continued to provide programming and opportunities to community members, and live up to its mission, and it cannot do so in the future without continued funding.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions about our support.

Thank you,

Jillian Harvey  
Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division  
Health and Human Services  
27 Maple Street  
Arlington, MA 02476  
[jharvey@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:jharvey@town.arlington.ma.us)

February 6, 2022

To the Finance Committee:

At its meeting on January 26, 2022, the Arlington Committee on Tourism and Economic Development (ATED) voted unanimously to support the FY22 budget request of the Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture (ACAC).

ACAC brings vibrance to our community through its projects and programs. It engages residents and showcases our artists' talent. It helps to make Arlington attractive to visitors, which in turn, supports our museums, performance venues, restaurants, and businesses. This has been especially important during the pandemic. Recent activities, which included supporting the holiday pop-up at Roasted Granola Café and sponsoring the window painting and the haiku contest projects in the Heights, helped to bring notice and customer traffic to our business districts.

The ArtsArlington website, which is maintained by ACAC, has become a go-to resource for artists and the cultural community. It is a point location for residents and visitors to learn about art community happenings. It provides a hub for the Chamber and ATED to publicize further the vibrance of our culture. The Chamber's new website, [VisitArlingtonMA.org](http://VisitArlingtonMA.org) and ATED's social media platforms, [ExploreArlingtonMA](#) link to and disseminate information from the site.

ATED has worked with and welcomes the opportunity to continue working with ACAC on various projects, such as last year's Go Out Doors public art installation. It gets regular updates from our members who serve on both committees. ATED urges support of the budget request so that ACAC can continue its work, which is vital to the arts and business communities in Arlington.

Sincerely,  
Angela Olszewski, chair  
On behalf of ATED

January 11, 2022

To whom it may concern:

Whenever someone mentions ACAC, I immediately pay attention. There are so many important things they've done for Arlington and the younger generations, which I'm a part of. I've been involved in some of their work: the plarn exhibit on the Minuteman bikeway, the youth banner project, and finally, and most importantly to me, the Climate Futures Arlington Internship. I am so pleased to write about ACAC and to have this opportunity to illuminate what ACAC means to me and the younger generation of Arlington.

As a highschooler, with not that much experience with big projects, or any internships, the Climate Futures internship changed my life. I learned to look at the world in a different way and so much more about climate change at a town level. In school, we learn about climate change on a big level, from a world perspective. This telescopic view looks at the big picture, but the internship taught me to look with a microscope at Arlington. I learned things like how trash gets incinerated in Arlington, Arlington's net zero goal by 2050, and pollinator gardens. Through the internship, I learned humility, resiliency, and about the town itself combating climate change. I've never felt more connected with a project before, and it wouldn't have been possible without this organization and the people involved.

The ACAC gives so many kids in Arlington an option to see the world from an adult's perspective. After all, kids grow up, and ACAC helps prepare us for that. With numerous projects and countless opportunities, I'm so glad that the ACAC exists. It's affected me from elementary school all the way to high school, and I've learned new ideas and gained experience because of it. I am now able to make ideas reality through thoughtful, step-based planning. I am now inspired to hone my artistic ability and pursue it through college. I am now confident in my writing abilities and web planning creativity. I feel like an adult with the experience ACAC gave me.

There are brilliant, thoughtful people working there: Cecily Miller and Stewart Ikeda to name a couple. I am glad that opportunities like ACAC exist and grateful it will continue to fuel creative inspiration for everyone.

**Greta Mastro**, Sophomore at AHS

Dear Arlington Finance Committee,

I am writing to you in support of continued funding for the Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture.

RepHAIRations is a fairly new business in Arlington Heights, opening our doors in Spring 2020, when everyone was still isolating and learning how to function during a pandemic. Obviously, COVID made it difficult to connect with the Arlington community right off the bat. But we had not been open for long when Cecily Miller sought us out and embraced us. She immediately recognized the opportunity for connection with and collaboration on the still-months-away time that Chanel Thervil would begin Arlington's artist-in-residence program. That connection has been instrumental in bridging the gap between Arlington's Black population and the larger Town population, among whom Black folks have felt largely isolated and marginalized. When RepHAIRations hosted Chanel's evening with Black residents of Arlington that launched her public art project, I was actually moved to tears by how meaningful and poignant that gathering was. It represented the fulfillment of our mission as a business in Arlington, and more importantly, it was a time of healing for the Arlington residents who have lacked Town support for so long.

The ACAC has shown us in such a small window of time just how vital they are to the spirit of Arlington!

All the best,

Yvonne Adams, co-owner of RepHAIRations

*The Arlington Public School Visual Art Department  
Arlington Public Schools  
Arlington, Massachusetts*

**February 11, 2021**

**To whom it may concern:**

**It is my pleasure to confirm that the Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture (ACAC) has been a wonderful collaborator with the Arlington Public Schools on the annual Youth Banner Initiative for five years. This community/school project has been and will continue to be an extraordinary example of what can be accomplished when the town, the schools and private citizens get together to support our student artists in this very public way. It also gives an Arlington family an opportunity to memorialize a former Arlington High School student who was committed to the study of art.**

**Each year, when twenty large banners designed by these student artists (selected from over 100 entries each year) fly high on poles in Arlington Center, thousands of travelers and shoppers get to appreciate the gifts of these artists and the school art programs that inspire them to do their best work. This project also gives students additional opportunities to express their opinions and feelings about important social issues and other themes that change from year to year.**

**I know that the ACAC and all of the schools will continue to work together to provide rich and diverse cultural and artistic opportunities for the Arlington community.**

**Sincerely,**

**David Arditto  
K-12 Director of Art of Visual Art  
Arlington Public Schools  
Arlington, Massachusetts**

February 10, 2021

Dear Arlington FinCom:

I'm writing in support of the ACAC / Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture, and the ArtsArlington web site it oversees. It's an invaluable resource for the Regent Theatre--an easy way for us to input our wide variety of events and get them noticed--not only within the Arlington community, but also by our ever-growing audience within the Greater Boston area (via ArtsBoston). These sites not only spur ticket sales and bring business to the Regent, but also contribute to a vibrant local economy when our audiences pay for parking and patronize restaurants and other businesses within Arlington.

Furthermore, as an Arlington resident for 40 years (and a former member of ACAC), I recognize this committee's work as being crucial to bringing together the town's arts & culture venues and community, and its commitment to promoting these entities--and the Arlington Cultural District as a whole--to residents of the town, along with citizens of Eastern Massachusetts and beyond.

Sincerely,

Leland Stein, Co-owner  
The Regent Theatre

February 12, 2021

To whom it may concern,

We are writing in support of the Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture (ACAC). The ACAC has been a wonderful support to the Old Schwamb Mill within the realms of public programming and community visibility.

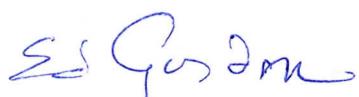
Over a year ago Cristin Bagnall was kind enough to meet with us to discuss the cultural programming at the Mill. She shared with us names of a variety of local individual musicians, musical groups and other artists who could perform at the Mill for an indoor or outdoor event.

A few months after her visit, the Mill was invited by ACAC to host a summit of over 25 representatives from other cultural non-profits in Arlington. The summit provided us with an excellent opportunity to introduce ourselves to first-time visitors and meet other cultural organizations from the community. The summit's workshops generated new ideas for publicity and grant resources for our future public programs.

This past September, on the recommendation of Cristin, the Mill hosted local puppeteer Margaret Moody, to perform a virtual puppet show, filmed on the grounds of the Mill over the summer. This puppet show broke new ground for our children's programming and we look forward to inviting Margaret Moody back to the Mill for future performances.

In closing, the ACAC has helped the Old Schwamb Mill to enrich our cultural programming and broaden our outreach to audiences of all ages in the Arlington community.

Sincerely,



Ed Gordon  
Director of Museum Programs  
Old Schwamb Mill



Janet O'Riordan  
Vice-President  
Schwamb Mill Preservation Trust Inc.

Via email from: Nora Mann  
[noramann2@gmail.com](mailto:noramann2@gmail.com)

February 12, 2021

To Whom it may Concern:

I have had the unmitigated, unabashed, and extraordinary pleasure of participating in a variety of public arts programs here in Arlington since before ACAC was formed. When it was a glimmer in the eye of people like Adria Arch and others, she led our community in the transformer box project and supported a vibrant conversation about public art. I yarnbombed trees on the bike path and crocheted old plastic bags. I met people all thru town and a lovely arts community grew.

ACAC and Cecily Miller have brought public art to the center of Arlington life and I am hopeful that this can continue and be expanded. Especially in these pandemic times - but indeed in all times - gathering together to make art is so meaningful. And there has been so much good work that anyone walking down the bikepath or indeed many streets in town can be struck by a random act of art. Art makes us smile, makes us think and ....makes us human and social.

Please continue to support the work of ACAC and the growth of public art in Arlington.

Thank you so much.

~Nora Mann  
Wollaston Ave (former TMM, former member ARB)



Stewart Ikeda <stewartikeda@gmail.com>

---

## Letter of Support for ACAC (from Odaiko New England)

---

katejurow@rcn.com <katejurow@rcn.com>  
To: chair@artsarlington.org  
Cc: enf1234@att.net, juni@onetaiko.org

Fri, Feb 12, 2021 at 10:56 AM

Stewart Ikeda

Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture

Dear Stewart,

This letter expresses my heartfelt support and appreciation for the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC), on behalf of Odaiko New England (ONE), a resident performing arts group at the Regent Theatre.

Eighteen months ago we relocated to Arlington from another town. We were delighted and overwhelmed at the welcome we received here, from the Town, community, and ACAC. With the assistance and encouragement of ACAC we have produced shows at the Regent, participated in local festivals and street fairs, connected to other artists, and drawn our audiences, students and patrons to the cafés, restaurants and shops in Arlington Center. ACAC helped us reach out and distribute free tickets to our performances to underserved Arlington communities. As a performing arts group that relies on earned income, Covid has been devastating for us. But ACAC and the Town made it possible for us to teach and rehearse outdoors in the Arlington parks (where we entertained passersby, and also picked up some students).

We came to Arlington from a bland, characterless suburb that paid little attention to the arts. What a joy it is to be welcomed into a vibrant community that supports the arts and is committed to making them accessible. Arts help to give Arlington its heart and soul, making it a destination to visit, as well as a wonderful place to live. And a central organization that pulls together the arts, effectively coordinates efforts, creates visibility and an arts agenda, is what keeps Arts going.

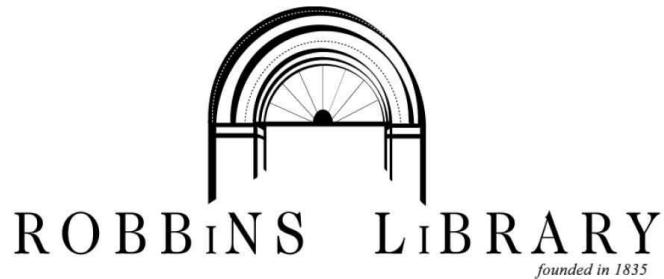
As Covid eventually draws to a close, I look forward to Art bursting out with joy all over Arlington. Thanks to the ACAC and support we have received, we hope to be part of that process.

Gratefully,

Kate Jurow

President, Board of Directors

Odaiko New England



February 12, 2021

Dear Arlington Finance Committee,

I am writing as the Fox Library Branch Manager to express support for ACAC's outstanding community work.

The Library has a history of supporting public art projects and collaborating with Arlington Public Art. This past year we worked closely with Cecily Miller and our Artist in Residence Michelle Lougee while she created Persistence. We hosted workshops, and meet-ups in the library before the pandemic and collected plastic bags for the project. We greatly enjoyed hosting these intergenerational gatherings where people were able to collaborate and teach each other a new art form. Even after the pandemic when we were no longer able to host in person, people continued to come together online and support each other. I know these bonds were extremely meaningful during the isolation of lockdown and helped everyone feel connected to their community.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions about our support.

Respectfully,

Amanda Troha

Branch Manager, Fox Library

## ROBERT S. DAVISON

7 Tanager St. Arlington, MA 02476

robertdavisondesign.com

r.davisondesign@gmail.com

617.840.6067

February 14, 2021

To whom it may concern,

I've been very impressed with the impact that the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture has had on the town of Arlington. I find their programming to be thoughtful and engaging, creating conversations regarding the role that art and culture can play in our daily lives. Their various signature programs such as Chairful and the Garage Band performance are well attended events, that attract a cross section of the town's demographics. This programing builds community on many different levels and improves the quality of life for our town's residents.

This past fall, I participated in painting a mural on to store fronts in Arlington Heights that had been empty for years. The goal of this effort was to beautify this area, draw interest from the neighborhood and to drive foot traffic to a parklet that was located nearby. The ACAC helped orchestrate this activity, which has been very well received by the local community.

I've been part of a collective that has been engaging with the town's economic development coordinator, discussing ways to enliven the Heights business district. The dominant thread that the group continues to come back to is the powerful role that arts and culture can play in transforming and activating a struggling commercial area. I look to the ACAC's leadership and vision as a driving force in this journey, where they can share their expertise to help identify ways for art and culture to help build community in Arlington Heights and across the town in exciting new ways.

Yours truly,

Rob Davison  
7 Tanager St.  
Arlington MA 02476

Resident member of the Arlington Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee



**TOWN OF ARLINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
51 GROVE ST, ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02476  
CHARLOTTE MILAN, RECYCLING COORDINATOR  
[CMILAN@TOWN.ARLINGTON.MA.US](mailto:CMILAN@TOWN.ARLINGTON.MA.US)  
TELEPHONE (781) 316-3108

February 16, 2021

Dear Cristin,

I am pleased to have this opportunity to write a letter in support of ACAC's work in collaboration with waste reduction and healthy ecosystems. The Department of Public Works, Zero Waste Arlington Committee, and the Arlington Green Teams all partnered with the exciting public art project eventually named and "Persistence: A Community Responds to Pervasive Plastic", with artist in residence Michelle Lougee.

I attended early planning meetings and was impressed with discussions around purpose, reach, and mission for the project. There was an interesting mix of people at that table, giving me an early, and accurate, sense that this was going to be a very community- inclusive public art project.

The community gatherings I attended were buzzing with multi-generational residents. Experienced crocheters were patiently teaching newbies, and those, like me, with no skills in that area, happily sorted the hundreds of plastics bags that would soon be transformed. I brought my never-crafty mother-in-law with me, she having moved to the area only weeks before and not knowing a soul. The crowd was warm and inviting, making pleasant conversation over their working hands. The whole scene harkened back to a simpler time, a barn-raising of sorts.

I brought a few large bags of bags to a middle school Green Team that thrilled in hearing about the project and got busy making plans while we discussed the overuse of plastic and the ecological toll it takes when it becomes litter. These are topics in which these 12 year olds were quite versed, as ocean microplastics and single use plastic reduction were concerns they took to heart as early as elementary school.

In my work as the waste reduction professional for the community, it is a constant challenge to engage residents in meaningful conversations about the larger environmental consequences of our hyper consumerist activities. Instead, they prefer to focus on the small item they wish to recycle. But that single recycling decision misses the larger point, the fact that we are interconnected to our ecosystems. We must feel our place in the natural world in order to take the challenging next steps to protect it and fight for the injustices done to it "on our behalf."

I believe that Persistence and the wrap-around experience of the community-creation achieved that emotional connection for our community members. The shock and beauty of the finished sculptures remain an ongoing reminder of both what we need to fight against (the material) and fight for- a cleaner and more beautiful earth. I thank Cecily Miller and ACAC for bringing the gift of this project to Arlington.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Milan, Recycling Coordinator  
Department of Public Works



[medfordartscouncil.org](http://medfordartscouncil.org)

Medford City Hall | 85 George P. Hassett Drive | Medford, MA 02155  
medfordartscouncil@gmail.com

February 16, 2021

The impact of COVID-19 on the arts community has been devastating, yet the demand for these resources has continued to grow and increase despite the circumstances. Collective creative experiences and healing through arts has never been more necessary and important to our communities.

The Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC) has continued to act as a bridge to connect its communities across sectors in these difficult times. ACAC has served as a resource and facilitator connecting state and municipal entities, businesses, organizations and artists for mutual support. The emphasis on cross-sector collaboration through the arts in Arlington has built a creative ecosystem and strong network ideal for culture to thrive.

As the Co-Chair of neighboring Medford Arts Council, it's particularly important to see regional communities like Arlington stay dedicated and committed to the arts. Even with the success of increased collaboration across sectors Arlington has seen, funding for public art projects, and creative community development goes a long way. The benefits of this funding extend to thousands of residents and visitors each year. Data collected by the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) early in the pandemic found that Massachusetts cultural organizations reported losses of more than \$55.7 million, while independent artists and teaching artists reported a loss of personal income of nearly \$3 million. These numbers are staggering, and the pandemic has only continued to age on since the reports on this data.

Despite pivoting to the closures, cancelations and challenges presented in 2020, organizations and agencies like ACAC still need opportunities for support to continue to activate creative expression and cultural experiences that make our communities healthy, connected, and vibrant. As long as ACAC continues to create access to affordable and equitable arts and culture programming, there will continue to be a significant impact on the Arlington community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danielle Moriarty".

Danielle Moriarty  
Co-Chair, Medford Arts Council



*Advocate Creativity.*

# MASSCREATIVE

About Us

News and Views

Take Action

Events

Create the Vote

Like Us On  
facebook

Follow Us On  
twitter

GET EMAIL UPDATES

Signup

or sign in with [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [email](#).

Give to Us

COVID-19

[home](#) | [covid-19](#) | [covid-19 updates](#) |

## Spotlight: Arlington Community Comes Together Through Art

Posted by Sophia Balsamo [5pc](#) on June 29, 2020 · [Flag](#)

Despite the isolation that the current public health emergency requires of all of us, the concept of community has never felt so important. Every day, we're seeing the ways people are reaching out to one another — to connect, to comfort, to offer resources or support or gratitude. For those of us involved in arts & culture here in the Commonwealth, this emphasis on community is not new, but rather baked into the very nature of our work. And in some very special places, these strong community networks have long been in the making.

This week, we can see the power of art and community shining its brightest in Arlington through the work of the **Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture**. In April, two large, colorful, mask-shaped banners and a line of mask-shaped prayer flags were hung over the Arlington Service Station to express gratitude to our caregivers and essential workers, and to remind us all to wear our masks and stay safe. The display was the brainchild of Arlington Service Station's owner **Abe Salhi**, whose business sits squarely within the town's cultural district and fosters a deep relationship with the artistic hub around it. After he approached artist **Johnny Lapham**—who painted the station's signature design—and ACAC co-chair **Stewart Ikeda**, the project came to life through a series of partnerships that tied together town and public health officials, Arlington Public Art Curator Cecily Miller, Heritage Flag Company, and a team of local volunteers. The idea of one soon became the proud work of many, and the day of the display's hanging brought joy to its creators and onlookers alike.

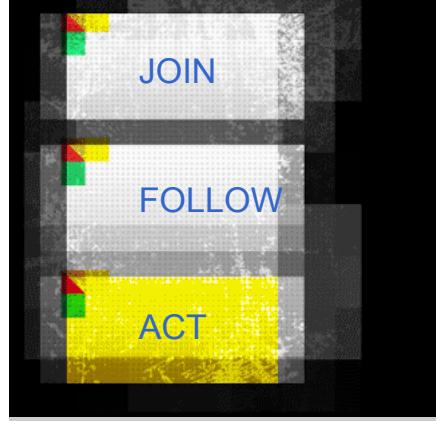
The pace and ease at which Arlington's community sprung into action may feel spontaneous, but in reality, it is the result of years of effort and dedication towards building strong networks within the town's many sectors. ACAC co-chair **Cristin Canterbury Bagnall** describes an ecosystem in Arlington that fosters relationships and works hard to integrate arts & culture beyond the boundaries of the cultural district. ACAC itself is formed with a "cross-pollination" design that emphasizes the voices of not only local artists and nonprofits, but also the public schools, the town libraries, and the Chamber of Commerce. By building a structure in which coalition and partnership is embedded into its ideals, the community is able to create a culture where everyone is already "leaning forward", ready to offer support and collaboration whenever and wherever it is needed.

At MASSCreative, we are proud to highlight Arlington and ACAC's work not only as an example of the power of partnership in one specific moment, but also as a demonstration of how long-term relationship-building creates a culture that allows these inspiring moments to happen. The kind of engagement we see in Arlington is what motivates us to promote the importance of the arts & culture in connecting communities and creating joy through public art for all.

### Do you like this post?

[Like](#)   [Share](#)   [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends like.

[Tweet](#)



### Tweets by @MASSCreative

 MASSCreative  
@MASSCreative

FLAG CALLING ALL #MA ARTS & CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS FLAG  
@masscultural's latest #COVID19 impact survey will be available until March 1st. Advocate for yourselves and each other by providing your data today!  
#ArtsAndCultureForMASSmassculturalcouncil.org/blog/mass-cult...



Mass Cultural Council Launc...  
Cultural Organizations: Help u...  
[massculturalcouncil.org](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#) Feb 17, 2021

 MASSCreative  
@MASSCreative

[Embed](#) [View on Twitter](#)

### Community Impact

Springfield's Drama Studio is one of the few theatre programs in the country to offer conservatory-style training for teens

The Drama Studio is one of a handful of youth theatres in the United States that offers quality, range, and depth in its acting training programs. For Springfield-area youth, the Studio's conservatory program offers an unusual opportunity for training that prepares

February 13, 2021

Dear Members of the Finance Committee, Town of Arlington,

I am writing today to express my support of the valuable work of the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture. I am a twenty-five-year resident of Arlington with a long career in the visual arts serving as an educator at the Museum of Fine Arts; gallery owner; and currently a board member of the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum in Lincoln and Gateway Arts in Brookline. I bring this professional perspective to my praise of Arlington's public art projects. I first became involved with the public art initiatives by taking an active role on the public art committee and also have fundraised for proposed projects along the Minuteman Bikeway. I can say with authority that the ACAC has invigorated our community with dynamic, high quality works of art that not only enrich civic life in Arlington but have brought visitors from other towns to experience these projects.

I have been impressed by the process in which the public art curator, Cecily Miller, has directly engaged a large number residents in planning and participating in creating works on the Bikeway. Volunteers from the community have worked with the artists to produce components for large scale installations. Through community collaboration, works such as Ripple and Persistence helped to create a sense of pride and connectedness among members of our community, particularly during the pandemic. The initiatives of ACAC have provided a catalyst for awareness and discussion around critical issues such as climate change, urban wildlife, and the deadly impact of single-use plastic. Many public art projects have also proactively engaged the participation of a number of town departments, town commissions, and elementary, middle and high school educators and students.

On a personal note, I have loved walking the Bikeway with friends and family and watching their joy as they encounter the wonderful works of art installed along the way. While dog walking in Menotomy Rocks Park, I have received enthusiastic support of the projects of ACAC from life-long residents of Arlington, many of whom had no prior involvement with the arts. I truly hope that the Town will continue to integrate the arts throughout the community, providing places of beauty and contemplation in Arlington's streets and green spaces.

Sincerely,  
Lorri Berenberg  
13 Woodland Street  
Arlington, MA 02476

February 15, 2021

To Whom It May Concern -

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture. I have a unique perspective on the work and the impact of the ACAC because I live in Arlington, have children in the public schools here and teach art at Ottoson Middle School. I have experienced in living and working here, what the ACAC adds to the culture and experience of our community and its visitors.

In the past few years I have worked with two artists in residence brought to town by the ACAC. Both artists collaborated with the art department and our students at the Ottoson. In the 2017/2018 school year, the artist Frank Vasello created land art installations along the bike path by Spy Pond to the surprise and delight of people walking and biking there and the children and families in the playground below it. During his residency Frank came to the Ottoson for several days to work in collaboration with our student artists. Together they built a beautiful piece of land art along the forest trails in the woods behind the school. Students working with Frank learned about his art and his process, and then collaborated with him to design and install a remarkable piece of art. Using only materials found in the woods and their collective imagination, Frank and our students built a stream of branches that ran down the hillside around rocks and trees. This experience brought the art world directly to our students and helped them to witness and create art that grew from and altered their environment. This project illustrated the power of art to shape the look and feel of a community and positively impact their own local culture. It also gave them hands-on experience working with natural materials and literally altering their environment with art. Frank Vasello brought their art education out of the classroom and into the world, where they witnessed the power and impact that art has in shaping the community that they live in.

In February 2020 the ACAC brought another artist in residence to Arlington. Michelle Lougee is a talented sculptor who makes art that is not only extremely interesting and beautiful to look at, but also educates her audience on the impact of plastics on the environment and on our bodies. Michelle came to the Ottoson and shared her incredible work and process not just with the art students, but also with the Ottoson Green Team, our environmental action club. In working with Michelle these students learned about the ability of art to bring voice to important social issues and to educate the public on matters that affect their world and their health. Students worked with Michelle to make her sculpting material, plarn - a yarn made of plastic bags - and were also given the opportunity to assist in creating pieces of the sculpture that would later adorn the bike path in the center of town. The Green team students were asked to help create the educational signs that were installed with the sculptures. Once again the ACAC introduced our students to the art world and empowered them to bring action through art to issues that are important to them. Students were offered an opportunity to make art and engage in their community and share in the positive impact that public art can have on everyone in it.

I look forward to more opportunities to collaborate with the ACAC as a resident and an educator. I hope that they will continue to be able to offer these invaluable experiences to our schools and to our community.

Thank you for supporting this remarkable organization and the work that it does to educate and to bring beauty and culture to all of us.

Sincerely,  
Polly Ford  
**Polly Ford**  
**Art Department**  
**Ottoson Middle School**  
**[pford@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:pford@arlington.k12.ma.us)**



Stewart Ikeda <stewartikeda@gmail.com>

---

## Your Arlington Support for ACAC @ FinComm

---

**Stewart Ikeda** <stewartikeda@gmail.com>

Draft

Fri, Feb 19, 2021 at 10:47 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bob Sprague** <sprague.bob@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, Feb 11, 2021 at 5:04 PM

Subject: Your Arlington Support for ACAC @ FinComm

To: Stewart Ikeda <stewartikeda@gmail.com>

### Letter in support of ACAC

I write to the town Finance Committee in support of continued funding for the Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture.

I do so as a resident since 1989 and as a journalist who has supported the arts during more than 50 years of reporting. Indeed, among the subjects that I find most engaging to readers in town since YourArlington began publishing in 2006 are the arts.

For my site, I find this particularly true starting about 2010, with efforts to launch public art here; in 2012, with the community-spurring meeting called "Arlington Alive!"; in 2015 and after, with the imaginative ideas of arts consultant Cecily Miller; and in 2017, with the town establishing a cultural district. The energy continues.

Who can forget the variety of ways that the Minuteman Bikeway, our town's spine, has been used as a launching spot for art -- from haiku on the hardtop to knitted sleeves on trees.

Throughout recent years, arts groups in town have contributed their creativity to a range of efforts, and in recent years, that has included Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture. The public can see its ongoing projects via its website -- <http://artsarlington.org/> -- whose events get prominent display at YourArlington.

My backing for the arts and the Arlington group that supports it -- ACAC -- is based on more than reader engagement. It is based on a notion that a caring, intelligent town fosters the arts because they are part of what engenders the community itself.

Bob Sprague  
Publisher  
YourArlington.com

Via email

February 16, 2021

To: Members of the Finance Committee, Town of Arlington

From: Rachel Oliveri, Arlington School Sustainability Coordinator

Re: Letter of support on behalf of the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC)

Dear Members of the Finance Committee:

I am writing in support of the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC). As the Arlington School Sustainability Coordinator, I work closely with students in the Arlington Public Schools who are part of environmental clubs and green teams and who advocate for the environment at their schools and in the Arlington community.

Cecily Miller of ACAC invited Arlington public school students to partner on their projects in the last couple of years, including the Fox Festival and the "Persistence" project with resident artist Michelle Lougee.

The Fox Festival project gave students the much-needed opportunity to connect with each other during the time they were in quarantine last spring and to create videos and animations to educate the Arlington community about climate change action and the protection of local wildlife. With the Persistence project, ACAC offered enriching workshops at Thompson Elementary School and Ottoson Middle School and I observed first hand how engaged and excited students were to learn to make plarn (plastic yarn) and marvel at the plastic ocean-themed art Lougee shared with them. Middle school and high school students continue to be involved in this project, researching facts about plastic pollution that will be integrated into the bike path exhibit in the spring.

These ACAC programs as well as others my family and I have enjoyed, such as Chairful Where You Sit, art on the bus shelters, bikeway haikus, and murals around town spark conversation, inspire creativity and perhaps most importantly, facilitate connection and community.

I urge the town to continue to offer financial support to the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture. They engage and inspire our public school students and their programs enrich our community.

Thank you,

Rachel Oliveri  
12 Iroquois Road

Rachel Oliveri  
Arlington School Sustainability Coordinator  
[roliveri@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:roliveri@arlington.k12.ma.us)  
<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/departments/public-works/recycling-trash-composting/school-programs>

February 17, 2021

Crystal Haynes  
Events Working Group Lead  
Arlington Human Rights Commission  
[ahrcevents@gmail.com](mailto:ahrcevents@gmail.com)

Re: Letter of Support for Arlington Commission on the Arts

There is a quote by Thomas Kincade that reads, ““art transcends cultural boundaries.” I’m reminded of that quote as I write in support of the continued work of the Arlington Commission on Culture and Arts.

This year, the Arlington Human Rights Commission’s Events Working Group and the ACAC’s Cecily Miller were able to put out a call to artists in record time and secure East Arlington native Rachel Domond to create the images for our 2021 Black History Month banners. The ACAC generously provided a \$1000 stipend toward the commission of the work. The banners are a shining example of Arlington’s commitment to diversity, inclusion and the celebration of all our town’s cultures. The ACAC and Cecily allowed us to bring in a talented artist capable of meeting that example.

ACAC’s work has been an invaluable asset to the AHRC and to the town.

Sincerely,  
*Crystal Haynes*  
she/her/hers  
Events Working Group Lead|Arlington Human Rights Commission  
[ahrcevents@gmail.com](mailto:ahrcevents@gmail.com)  
[arlingtonhumanrights.org](http://arlingtonhumanrights.org)

***LET'S GET SOCIAL!***

Instagram @ArlingtonHumanRights  
Facebook @ArlHumanRights  
Twitter @ArlHumanRights

February 17, 2021

Over the past two years, I have had the pleasure of working with members of the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC) through my involvement in the Arlington Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee (AHNAPIC). Much of the work that we are focused on in our Committee is centered around placemaking and activation of the Heights Business District in a way that is meaningful to Arlington residents. Through this exploration, the ACAC has been a thoughtful contributor in the ideation and implementation of community enrichment programs such as a recently launched storefront window mural program in the Heights.

In concert with the Town's public parklet program, the activation of vacant storefront windows by the ACAC brought light and joy into the neighborhood during the pandemic this summer and has been enjoyed by users of the parklet, pedestrians passing by to shop adjacent businesses, and all who drive through this busy section of Mass Ave. In addition to the planned Spring Neighborhood Haiku project in the Heights, there are additional aspirational community activation projects that are currently being considered by the AHNAPIC, including the use of art to activate critical under-utilized nodes within the Heights business district and the community activation and revitalization of the public space abutting the MBTA Bus Turnaround. We hope to be able to continue to collaborate with the ACAC on these future activations as time and budget will allow.

Personally, having hosted live music during the Arlington Center for the Arts' Porchfest pre-pandemic, I am also looking forward for opportunities to continue to support Porchfest in whatever shape and form it takes during 2021. As a member of the Arlington Economic Development Recovery Task Force, we heard during our most recent planning meeting from business owners who shared how important that particular event is to their financial bottom line given increased customer traffic during those days and residents were longing to find a way to safely celebrate such an iconic community building event after so many months of isolation.

Public Art in all its forms, from visual to performing arts and cultural events and programming, have a way of bringing people together. Now more than ever, the ACAC is poised to play that role when we need it the most.

Thank you,  
Rachel Zsembery  
Arlington Resident (Appleton St)  
Arlington Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee  
Arlington Economic Development Recovery Task Force  
Arlington Redevelopment Board (Chair)

Seven years ago, my family decided it was time to move closer to the city. We considered several towns but chose only Arlington for our search. For us we wanted a place that was walkable and filled with history, arts and cultural. We are a family that enjoys the arts and are always continuing to learn. We landed in a spot walkable to both East Arlington and Town Center. My husband is a cyclist and having a bike path filled with art is a bonus.

When we first arrived, there was a mural and history exhibit in Capitol Square that was both beautiful and inspiring to me. I dabble in the arts and from that point I decided it was a goal for me to participate in some kind of public art. I started by attending an arts information meeting at Arlington Town Hall that was reaching out on how to engage our community in the arts. ArtLinks Arlington an arts network group was created from as a result of that meeting. I started as a participant and eventually joined the steering committee creating all sorts of support and learning opportunities.

Since then, I was able to achieve my goal in creating public art. In collaboration with local artists, I have painted a utility box in town center, contributed my time to the “Persistence” exhibit and paint haiku on the bikeway. I love the way Arlington strives to get folk out into the public to appreciate the arts. I had a great time painting a door with a friend for “Go Out Doors” that is on the bikeway for everyone to enjoy.

I appreciate the efforts of the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture to create so many opportunities for all of us to enjoy. I am happy to report that Arlington has been a great choice for me and my family.

Laurie Bogdan

Members of the Finance Committee  
Town of Arlington

Dear hardworking volunteers,

This letter is in support of funding for the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC).

I have worked on two of the community public art projects over the past two plus years, responding to a Facebook post from what is now the ACAC. I have knitted, cut strips of plastic bags and made plarn, and then marveled at the results on the bike path. I have met other people working on these tasks to contribute to the large displays. I have met the artist of the plarn project, Michelle Lougee. I have walked the bike path many times to see the results of our work. As I stood appreciating, other walkers and bikers have stopped to admire them, sometimes asking if I helped. I am so proud, so happy to describe what I did, show them the knitted parts I did, and tell them about the many plastic bags collected and stripped and made into plarn and then the shapes suspended between the trees.

I have also read the Opposites painted on the bike path as I walked or rode my bike over them. I attended the artist's presentation on that work, learning what she had in mind. The words still make me think as I see the one remaining pair after the rest have faded.

I love the haiku on the sidewalks, familiar sights of wild turkeys, birds, flowers made clearer by Arlington citizens writing about them in 17 syllables.

All these sights have added so much to my appreciation of Arlington, being outdoors, thinking about the creativity of so many people. Being a part of the creation of some of them has made me proud, as it has my friends who have also helped. I have met some new people in town who share my interests in helping more creative people build from what I make.

My family nearby and all over the country have seen my photos, are interested now in public art installations where they live. My daughter wanted to walk the bike path to see the knitting around the trees when she visited from California.

Please fund as well as you can this group that contributes to all our public lives.

Barbara A Payne  
29 Oxford Street  
Arlington

Jason Forney  
545 Summer Street  
Arlington, MA 02474

2/15/21

Town of Arlington  
Finance Committee  
Arlington, MA 02474

Dear Town of Arlington:

I am writing to support the good work done by the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC). The ACAC's work has a positive effect on multiple aspects of town life. I write to you as a resident, as a parent of 2 children in the Arlington Public School system, and as a member of the Arlington Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee.

My family has called Arlington home for 12 years, and we are very proud to live here. One of the reasons is because of the creative spirit and access to arts and culture. Art provides a way to explore relationships to each other and the key issues of our time. In a time of crisis, the arts are needed more than ever, and the ACAC serves a key role in creating an environment for the arts and culture, enlivening the public realm, supporting local artists and bring residents together—a mission that I strongly support. In 2021, art can also help us explore our collective views on important issues such as climate change, racial justice and public health.

As a parent, I have been encouraged with the emphasis on visual and performing arts in the Public Schools. It is unique in metrowest Boston, and a good investment in the future of our children. Both of my children have played musical instruments since third grade and my daughter has a bedroom full of paintings taped to her walls from her recent AP Art class at the high school. Her work was chosen for the Youth Banner contest in 2020. This is a great way to involve young people in public art. Many of the ACAC's programs, including the Fox Festival, Youth Banner Program and Live Arts make our community better and encourage young people to be creative.

Finally, as a resident member of the Arlington Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee (AHNAPIC), I suggest the ACAC can play a role in bringing vibrancy and energy to our town centers, especially at a time when the economy is down. As the result of a community engagement process, our committee is charged with exploring "ways in which creative place-making projects.... can bring vitality to the Heights and foster a more active and vibrant street life." Our group has identified the ACAC as a partner in achieving this goal. One example is the painting of the

Town of Arlington

2/15/21

Page 2

transformation of two vacant storefronts at 1308 Massachusetts Avenue that have been empty for some time. Working with artist Adria Arch, volunteers from the community spent 2 days painting the glass with brightly colored and patterned art, bringing a sense of uplifting to the area. This project was sponsored by ACAC and sets a positive example.

Thank you for reading this—and thank you for the work you do. I hope you agree that the ACAC is an important component of town life, one that is shared and enjoyed by Arlington residents.

Sincerely,

Jason Forney

To members of the Arlington Finance Committee:

I participated in the 2020 ACAC community project titled "Persistance" which involved crocheting recycled plastic bags into colorful creatures under the direction of artist Michelle Lougee. Working on the project gave me a sense of community spirit and (until the pandemic hit) an opportunity to meet and share with other town members in person. I even helped at a table demonstrating how to create plastic yarn at an Arlington school "Science Day" and got to meet school aged children and their parents, something I have not had the opportunity to do in my 34 years living in Arlington. Since the project has been installed in the trees on the Minuteman Bike Path, I have invited many friends and family to walk with me and view the plastic works. I have been proud to help demonstrate how the Town of Arlington values its community and environment by showcasing the problem of plastic in our environment. I feel that the ACAC contributes to community enrichment and is an important part of our town.

Thank you,              Susan Whitney 54 Summit St. Arlington, Ma 02474

